

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A movable unit for screening excavated material ~~that to protectively covers~~ cover or ~~encases~~ encase one or more utilities in an excavated trench, comprising:

a screening member mounted to the unit and located within the trench above the one or more utilities in the trench;

a plow for sweeping excavated material lying along at least one side of the trench onto said screening member, wherein said screening member has and having at least one screen with a plurality of openings ~~of appropriate size,~~ with the excavated material passing through the openings of the said at least one screen to deposit onto ~~and cover and encase~~ the utility or utilities ~~being~~ installed in the trench as the unit moves.

2. (Original) A movable unit as claimed in claim 1, and further comprising a guide for placing a length of at least one utility onto which the screened material is deposited in the trench as the unit moves.

3. Cancelled.

4. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein said screening member is mounted to said movable unit with a downward slope in the trench away from the direction of movement of the movable unit.

5. (Original) The movable unit as claimed in claim 1 and further comprising a shaker unit connected to said screening member to shake said screening member to facilitate passage of particles though the openings of said at least one screen.

6. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 18 wherein said screening member comprises a plurality of screens spaced apart, one above

the other, with said screens having progressively smaller openings from the top to bottom of the screening member ~~to deposit in the trench layers of the material having progressively larger particle size from the bottom to the top of the trench.~~

7. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim 6 wherein said screening member is mounted to said movable unit with a downward slope in the trench away from the direction of movement of the movable unit.

8. (Original) The movable unit as claimed in claim 7 wherein the trailing end of each screen of said screening member extends out further in a direction rearward of the movable unit movement than the screen immediately below it.

9. (Original) The movable unit as claimed in claim 8 and further comprising a shaker unit connected to said screening member to shake said screening member to facilitate passage of particles through the openings of each of said plurality of screens.

10. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein said screening member comprises a first screen as an upper screen and a second screen as a lower screen, the trailing end of said first screen extending further in a rearward direction of the unit than the trailing end of said second screen, said second screen having openings of a smaller size than the openings of said first screen, whereby a first layer of smallest size particles passing through the openings of said first and second screens are deposited on the at least one utility in the trench, a second layer of particles of a size smaller than the openings of said first screen but larger than the openings of said second screen that slides off of the top surface of said second screen onto the first layer of particles, and a third layer of particles of a size larger than the openings of said first screen that slide off of the top surface of said first screen onto the second layer of particles.

11. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim ~~10~~ 1 and further comprising a vertical plate mounted on each side of said movable unit to support a wall of the trench and to prevent ~~any undesirable materials~~ material from falling onto the at least one installed utility being covered by the layers of the particles.

12. Cancelled

13. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim ~~12~~ 1, and further comprising a means for adjusting the height of said ~~plows~~ plow relative to the top of the trench.

14. Cancelled.

15. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim ~~14~~ 19, and further comprising a shaker unit connected to said screening member to shake said screening member to facilitate passage of particles through the openings of said first and second screens.

16. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim ~~14~~ 19 wherein said screening member comprises said first screen as an upper screen and a second screen as a lower screen, the trailing end of said first screen extending further in a rearward direction of the unit than the trailing end of said second screen, said second screen having openings of a smaller size than the openings of said first screen, whereby a first layer of smallest size particles passing through the openings of said first and second screens are deposited on the at least one utility in the trench, a second layer of particles of a size smaller than the openings of said first screen but larger than the openings of said second screen that slides off of the top surface of said second screen onto the first layer of particles, and a third layer of particles of a size larger than the openings of said first

screen that slide off of the top surface of said first screen onto the second layer of particles.

17. (Currently amended) The movable unit as claimed in claim 10 and further comprising a vertical plate mounted on each side of said movable unit to support a wall of the trench and to prevent any undesirable materials from falling onto ~~the~~ at least one installed utility being covered by the layers of the particles.

18. (New) The movable unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein said screening member is formed in a manner to deposit in the trench layers of the material having progressively larger particle sizes from the bottom to the top of the trench.

19. (New) The movable unit as claimed in claim 18 wherein said screening member is mounted to said movable unit with a downward slope in the trench away from the direction of movement of the movable unit.